



Grand Traverse Insider Article
Submitted by Tom Van Deinse, CEO
Grand Traverse Bay YMCA
October 3, 2011

Every Kid Deserves a Y

Annie Gerstner, Kendra Benak, Francie Flores, and Patricia Davis, at just 14 years old or younger, have already collected scores of first place gymnastics gold medals, and combined for 14 individual first place and a team third place state banner last year.

Their 44 Y Gymnastics teammates, led by Amy Davis, Kayla Brady, Rachel Ovalle, Olivia Flores, Darby Drake, Jade Turner, Annemarie Jenkins, and Kayla Brady have added enough gold of their own to fill a vault.

Or at least a YMCA.

That's the kind of quality programming offered at the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA gymnastics center. The YMCA believes that every kid deserves that kind of opportunity. Every kid deserves a chance to be their best. Every kid deserves a Y.

But gymnastics is just one of many programs offered by the Y. Did you know that in all of the Midwest tennis section, comprised of Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, only the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA tennis program has produced two top boys 10 & under tennis players this year? Chicago kids couldn't do it. Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Detroit couldn't do it. But two of our local Y kids did it. CJ Shoults and Elliott Bandrowski are currently ranked fifth and sixth among the thousands of Midwest tennis players.

And they're not alone. Sam Holmes, Paige Cooley, Christie Druskovic, Parker Berden, Austin Weiland, Sierra Falconer, Anne and Amanda Bandrowski, Kelly Milliken, and Mace Shoults are also YMCA tennis standouts.

That's the kind of quality programming offered at the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA tennis center. The YMCA believes that every kid deserves that kind of opportunity. Every kid deserves a chance to be their best. Every kid deserves a Y.

The YMCA's Early Childhood Education Center, too, is building budding champions every day, and the YMCA's lacrosse program has created college scholarship opportunities for several players like Aadam Debevick. Did you know that the YMCA's Youth in Government program has even yielded a state governor, Ned Hartwick from Leland? Or that professional basketball player Dan Majerle got his start at our local Y? Or that football greats like the Bullough brothers and Dan Bazuin first learned their skills at our local Y?

That's the kind of quality programming that every kid deserves. Every kid deserves a Y.

With more than 11,000 program users in 65 programs within the five county region, everyone knows the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA for its quantity of programming. Thanks to the Y's "Invest in Youth" annual scholarship fund drive, to be kicked off at the October 26 Corporate Advisory Committee luncheon, every kid has a chance to participate in YMCA programs.

Quality programs. The kinds of programs every kid deserves. Because every kid deserves a chance to be their best.

Every kid deserves a Y.

For more information about YMCA Invest in Youth or the free Corporate Advisory Committee luncheon, contact YMCA Director of Development and Marketing Dave Eitland at 933-YMCA or visit www.gtbayymca.org.